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The Honorable Bill Thomas
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care, I want to thank you for your efforts in shepherding Section 7401 "Strengthening Courts" of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 through to passage.

As you know, no child enters or leaves foster care without a judge's decision. There can be no more important task facing our State courts than that of protecting children in foster care and moving swiftly to find these children safe, permanent families that will love and nurture them. Despite this critical role, the dependency courts often lack sufficient tools, information, and accountability to accomplish this important work.

Section 7401, which is consistent with the Pew Commission's recommendations, provides critical new resources for these courts, in particular to focus on developing judicial training and performance measures. I am well aware that including significant new funding in the Deficit Reduction Act, was no easy task, and I thank you again for your leadership.

I know that the Subcommittee on Human Resources will continue to look at strategies for improving our nation's child welfare system. As they do, I hope that they will continue to consider the Commission's remaining recommendations related to child welfare financing. These recommendations provide a viable mechanism for crafting reforms in the child welfare system and demonstrate our collective and continuing commitment to safety, permanency and well-being for all of America's children.

Sincerely,

Bill Frenzel
Chairman

Bill -
You have executed another
great act of legislative leadership
for which we are very grateful.
Bill